

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 INR-10 IO-14 MED-03 NSAE-00
PA-02 HA-05 CA-01 OES-07 USIA-15 CIAE-00 AID-05
DODE-00 /083 W
-----031069 250156Z /72

P 242100Z FEB 78
FM AMCONSUL GUADALAJARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3921
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 GUADALAJARA 0301

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC MX
SUBJ: PUBLIC HEALTH: TYPHOID IN PUERTO VALLARTA

REF: GUADALAJARA 0265

SUMMARY: SUBSEQUENT TO THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM THE CONSULATE GENERAL HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH VARIOUS SOURCES IN AN EFFORT TO CLARIFY THE LEVEL OF THE TYPHOID OUTBREAK IN PUERTO VALLARTA. AN INVESTIGATION BY MEXICAN HEALTH OFFICIALS IS UNDERWAY AND OFFICIAL INFORMATION HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN PENDING COMPLETION OF THE INVESTIGATION. INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF RELIABLE CONTACTS ALL INDICATE THAT THERE IS NO EPIDEMIC OR UNUSUAL LEVEL OF TYPHOID IN PUERTO VALLARTA. HOWEVER, LOCAL RADIO PROGRAMS HAVE SPOKEN OF POSSIBLE SUPPRESSION OF FACTS BY MEDICAL AUTHORITIES. ALSO, A LOCAL MEDICAL DOCTOR CONTACT QUOTES THE GUADALAJARA BASED HEAD OF THE REGIONAL SECTION OF THE STATE MEDICAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT AS STATING THAT AN EPIDEMIC EXISTS BUT IS WELL UNDER MEDICAL CONTROL. THE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL CENTER OF USPHS IS REPORTEDLY INVOLVED AT THIS POINT. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONFIRM THAT FACT WITH USPHS. PLEASE ADVISE CONGEN OF RESULTS.

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1. MEXICAN MEDICAL OFFICIALS FROM MEXICO CITY AND GUADALAJARA ARE LEADING AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TYPHOID SITUATION IN PUERTO VALLARTA. CONGEN INQUIRIES OF THE MEDICAL OFFICIALS BOTH IN PUERTO VALLARTA AND HERE IN GUADALAJARA HAVE BEEN MET WITH RESPONSES THAT NO INFORMATION CAN BE RELEASED BECAUSE THE INVESTIGATION IS STILL UNDERWAY.

2. THROUGH A VARIETY OF CONTACTS IN PUERTO VALLARTA, INCLUDING HOTEL OWNERS AND AMERICAN CITIZENS, CONGEN HAS CONFIRMED THAT AN INVESTIGATION IS BEING MADE OF WATER SUPPLIES, HEALTH PROCEDURES AND WASTE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS IN HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS. THE INVESTIGATION IS APPARENTLY BEING PURSUED WITH VIGOR AND HAS THE SUPPORT OF HOTEL OWNERS WHO REALIZE THE EFFECT OF TYPHOID SCARE ON THEIR BUSINESS. MEETINGS HAVE BEEN HELD AMONG LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND OFFICIALS OF PUERTO VALLARTA INCLUDING THE MAYOR. REPORTS FROM THE GROUP TO DATE ARE TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE IS DEFINITELY NO EPIDEMIC OF TYPHOID IN PUERTO VALLARTA. IN FACT, A HEALTH DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE AT ONE MEETING REPORTEDLY DECLARED THERE HAD BEEN NO REPORTED CASES OF TYPHOID AT PUERTO VALLARTA SINCE OCTOBER 1977.

3. THE CONSUL GENERAL CONTACTED THE DIRECTOR OF TOURISM FOR THE STATE OF JALISCO AND INFORMED HIM THAT UNTIL WE HAD OFFICIAL INFORMATION TO THE CONTRARY FROM APPROPRIATE MEDICAL AUTHORITIES THE CONGEN COULD NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBLE EXISTENCE OF TYPHOID IN PUERTO VALLARTA WHEN RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES.

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4. THE TOURISM DIRECTOR CONFIRMED THAT HEALTH OFFICIALS CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION ARE PROHIBITED FROM COMMENTING ON THE INVESTIGATION BY ORDERS FROM THE MEXICAN HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN MEXICO CITY. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE DID LEARN THAT MEXICAN HEALTH OFFICIALS ARE IN CONTACT WITH THE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CENTER OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE IN ATLANTA (DEPT. PLEASE CONFIRM), AND THAT THE INVESTIGATION WOULD BE DEFINITELY CONCLUDED SHORTLY.

5. THE TOURISM DIRECTOR ADDED THAT HIS PERSONAL INVESTIGATION IN PUERTO VALLARTA REVEALED THE FOLLOWING: THERE WERE THREE CHARTERED GROUPS FROM MASSACHUSETTS UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF "JOHN KEITH ASSOCIATES". ONE GROUP WAS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 8 TO 15, THE SECOND FROM JANUARY 22 TO 29 AND THE THIRD FROM FEBRUARY 19 TO 26. THE FIRST GROUP HAD EXPERIENCED NO PROBLEMS, AND THE THIRD GROUP WAS CANCELLED. THE SECOND GROUP IS THE ONE IN WHICH TYPHOID OUTBREAKS OCCURRED AFTER THE GROUP HAD RETURNED TO THE U.S. HIS INFORMATION IS THAT 25 OF THAT GROUP WERE DIAGNOSED AS HAVING TYPHOID AND 12 OTHERS WITH SYMPTOMS. HE ADDED HOWEVER, THAT AT THE SAME TIME THE SECOND GROUP WAS IN P.V., ANOTHER GROUP OF ABOUT 300 WAS STAYING IN THE SAME HOTEL AND THERE WERE OVER 200 HOTEL EMPLOYEES THERE. NONE OF THE OTHER GROUP AND NONE OF THE EMPLOYEES DEVELOPED THE

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DISEASE TO HIS KNOWLEDGE. HE CONFIRMS THE PUERTO VALLARTA HEALTH OFFICIAL CLAIMS THAT THERE IS NO REPORT OF LOCAL TYPHOID IN P.V. SINCE OCTOBER 1

2. DOTE: THERE ARE OTHER DISEASE, ALSO ENDEMIC TO THE AREA, THAT ARE VERY SIMILAR TO TYPHOID BUT TECHNICALLY ARE NOT THE SAME DISEASE. IT IS UNCLEAR TO WHAT EXTENT, IF ANY, THE SIMILARITY OF DISEASES IS INVOLVED IN THE DISCLAIMER OF THE EXISTENCE OF TYPHOID THERE.)

6. THE TOURISM DIRECTOR ASSURED THE CONSUL GENERAL THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS BEING HONESTLY PURSUED AND THAT THE MEXICAN CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO NOTIFY HIM OF THE OFFICIAL MEDICAL FINDINGS IMMEDIATELY SO THAT HE CAN RELEASE THEM TO US. HE AND LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS MAINTAIN THAT THE EVENTUAL RESULT OF INVESTIGATION WILL BE TO MAKE THE POPULAR RESORT AREA SAFER FROM THE POSSIBILITIES OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASES. DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REPORTED.

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